

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2093  
INFO AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD

UNCLAS TEHRAN 3317

E.O.11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR, IR, IZ  
SUBJ: INTERVIEW WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: SADDAM HUSSEIN, VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE IRAQI REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL (RCC) GAVE EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW TO TEHRAN JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT ALI REZA JAHAN-SHAHI WHICH WAS PUBLISHED APRIL 17 IN LOCAL PAPER. WIDE-RANGING BAGHDAD INTERVIEW COVERED HUSSEIN'S VIEWS ON PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, IRAQ-IRAN BILATERAL RELATIONS, PERSIAN GULF SECURITY, IRAQ'S RELATIONS WITH SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, INTERNAL IRAQI POLITICS AND OIL AS POLITICAL WEAPON. END SUMMARY.

2. PALESTINIAN ISSUE: HUSSEIN GAVE PREDICTABLY HARD-LINE ANSWER TO QUESTION ON POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO PROBLEM OF PALESTINIANS. HE SAID, "POSITIVE CHANGES IN WORLD OPINION AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS REGARDING THIS EXPLOSIVE ISSUE DID NOT TAKE PLACE BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN DISCOVERED THAT THE ARABS WERE RIGHT. THEY CAME ABOUT BECAUSE OF THE NEW POSITIONS OF POWER AND INFLUENCE ACQUIRED BY THE ARABS AND THIS PUTS A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE ARAB LEADERS NOT TO LET THEIR PEOPLES DOWN." HUSSEIN ADDED THAT THE ARAB NATION AS A WHOLE WOULD NEVER YIELD TO ANY SOLUTION THAT FAILED TO ACCOMPLISH THE LIBERATION OF OCCUPIED PALESTINE.

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3. IRAQ-IRAN RELATIONS: SINCE ALGIERS ACCORD BILATERAL RELATIONS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPING IN BEST POSSIBLE WAY AND NO IMPORTANT OR "SEMI-IMPORTANT" ISSUE REQUIRES SOLUTION, ACCORDING TO HUSSEIN. HE ADDED THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES MUST NOW PUT "MORE EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL EXCHANGES."

4. PERSIAN GULF SECURITY: HUSSEIN REITERATED WELL-KNOWN POSITION THAT THE ESSENCE OF IRAQ'S POLICY EVOLVED AROUND PROMOTION OF BILATERAL COOPERATION TO ATTAIN SECURITY AND STABILITY IN THE REGION. HE SAID, "WE ARE FULLY IN AGREEMENT WITH THE NEED FOR COOPERATION AMONG REGIONAL COUNTRIES AIMED AT PUTTING AN END TO THE INTERFERENCE OF FOREIGN POWERS IN THE REGION. BUT...THE NATURE OF VARIOUS REGIMES IN THE REGION AND ALSO THE NATURE OF THE KIND OF POLICIES PROMOTED BY VARIOUS OUTSIDE POWERS IN THIS SENSITIVE PART OF THE MIDDLE EAST IS SO VASTLY DIFFERENT...(WE SHOULD) FIRST PLACE EMPHASIS ON THE EXPANSION OF BILATERAL COOPERATION." WITH REGARD TO US NAVY VISITS TO THE AREA, HUSSEIN STATED, "WE DO NOT FEEL EASY ABOUT THESE VISITS TO THE REGION. THE SAME IS TRUE ABOUT THE VISITS TO IRAQ BY SOVIET NAVAL UNITS."

5. FRIENDSHIP WITH SOCIALIST COUNTRIES: IN AN IRONIC FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS-MENTIONED "UNEASE" ABOUT SOVIET VISITS TO GULF, HUSSEIN BOASTED THAT "IRAQ WAS THE FIRST ARAB REGIME TO RAISE THE SLOGAN OF STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. THIS SLOGAN IN MY VIEW HAS BEEN BASED ON THE NEED TO ESTABLISH STRONG TIES WITH ALL REVOLUTIONARY AND PROGRESSIVE FORCES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD".

6. IRAQ'S RELATIONS WITH THIRD WORLD: "WE HAVE ALWAYS TRIED SINCERELY TO ESTABLISH THE BEST OF RELATIONS WITH OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES..THE AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IRAQ HAS EXTENDED VARIOUS THIRD WORLD STATES COULD BE REGARDED AS AN INDICATION OF THIS THINKING," HUSSEIN NOTED.

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7. IRAQ'S INTERNAL POLITICS: "I THINK THAT THE ERROR FOUND AMONG BA'ATHISTS, AND PARTICULARLY AMONG THE COMMUNISTS (WE SHOULD STATE THIS BOLDLY AND FRANKLY ESPECIALLY SINCE THE COMMUNISTS' ERROR IN THIS CASE OUTWEIGHS THAT OF THE BA'ATHISTS) OCCURS WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL COMRADE, FROM HIS OWN IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE, BELIEVES THAT HE ALONE CAN BRING ABOUT THE FULL AND ABSOLUTE TRUTH IN PRACTICE. HE THEN INSISTS ON THIS CONVICTION, ASKING OTHERS TO FOLLOW HIM. ALL HIS SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS THEN WILL BE AFFECTED BY THIS POSITION. SUCH AN INCORRECT NOTION OF INDEPENDENCE IF IT CONTINUES, DOES NOTHING TO AID THE FRONT IN REACHING ITS STRATEGIC HORIZONS", ACCORDING TO HUSSEIN. HOWEVER, HE DOES HAVE CONFIDENCE IN A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR IRAQ, "REGARDLESS OF THE GLOOMY PICTURE THAT MIGHT APPEAR AT PRESENT". WITH REGARD TO PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE BY MINORITY GROUPS, HUSSEIN SAID THE BA'ATH PARTY IS "FOR THE IRAQI PEOPLE IN GENERAL, BE THEY KURDS, ARABS, OR THE LIKE".

8. OIL AS POLITICAL WEAPON: REFERRING TO THE NATIONALI-

ZATION OF THE OIL INDUSTRY, HUSSEIN NOTED THAT IRAQ HAD  
"ACHIEVED PART OF OUR OBJECTIVE". HE ADDED THAT IRAQI  
POLICY MUST GO BEYOND ABSTRACT IDEA OF LIBERATING OIL  
WEALTH AND FOCUS ON: "THE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR WHICH RIPENED  
THIS IDEA AND CRYSTALLIZED IT".  
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